
Higher Education Committee

SSB 5360

Brief Description: Studying performance and funding of running start students.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education (originally sponsored by Senators Brandland, Sheldon, Fairley, Berkey, Delvin, Benson and Rockefeller).

<p>Brief Summary of Substitute Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires a study of the Running Start program.

Hearing Date: 3/23/05

Staff: Sydney Forrester (786-7120).

Background:

Running Start

In 1990, the Legislature created the Running Start dual-enrollment program as part of the Learning By Choice Act. Running Start provides 11th and 12th-grade students the option of attending courses at participating institutions of higher education for which dual high school and college/university credit is earned. Students must meet entrance criteria established by the participating colleges and universities and may earn the equivalent of up to two academic years of college credit in the program.

Certificate of Academic Achievement

Beginning with the high school graduating class of 2008, high school students must earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA) in order to be eligible to graduate. The CAA is evidence a student has met the state's academic standards in reading, writing, and mathematics on the high school Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL). Beginning in 2010, science will be added as a content requirement of the WASL for earning a CAA.

Summary of Bill:

Within current budgets, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and the Higher Education Coordinating Board are directed to study student performance on the high school WASL and the subsequent student performance in college-level courses under the Running Start program. The study must include:

- correlations between student scores on the WASL and placement tests used at two-year and four-year colleges and universities;

- correlations between student scores on the WASL, placement tests, and performance in courses taken under Running Start;
- completion rates of courses taken by Running Start students who met the proficiency standard on the WASL; and
- causes for students not completing Running Start courses.

The study also must examine the current Running Start funding formula and include any recommendations for changes to the distribution of funds between school districts and institutions of higher education. The study must be completed by January 15, 2006, and the results will be reported to the Governor, the State Board of Education, and the fiscal and education committees of the Legislature.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.